

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAJ-01 EB-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /116 W

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R 041609Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4495

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, UK

SUBJECT: HEATH FLESHES OUT NATIONAL CONTRACT PROPOSAL

SUMMARY: CONSERVATIVE LEADER HEATH OCTOBER 3 ANNOUNCED
THREE NEW ELEMENTS OF THE PREVIOUSLY ILL-DEFINED "NATIONAL
CONTRACT" PROPOSAL (LONDON 12784) WHICH WAS DESIGNED TO
COUNTER LABOR PARTY'S SOCIAL CONTRACT AND UNIFY BRITISH
NATION. HE ALSO LAUNCHED NEW EFFORT TO RALLY NON-SOCIAL-
IST VOTE TO CONSERVATIVE CAUSE. IMPACT OF THESE INITIA-
TIVES ON ELECTORATE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE SIGNIFICANT,
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BUT MEDIA INTERPRETS THEM AS FURTHER INDICATION TORY

COMMITMENT TO SEEK COALITION IN EVENT LABOR IS UNABLE TO
GAIN PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY. END SUMMARY

1. IN SERIES OF OCTOBER 3 STATEMENTS, CONSERVATIVE
LEADER HEATH BEGAN TO HANG FLESH ON BARE BONES OF EARLIER
"NATIONAL CONTRACT" SCHEME WHICH CONSERVATIVES CLAIM WILL
UNITE NATION. HEATH NOW ENVISAGES THREE MAJOR ELEMENTS
IN NATIONAL CONTRACT. FIRST WOULD BE ESTABLISHMENT OF
NEW MECHANISM BASED ON EXISTING NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOP
MENT COUNCIL ("NEDDY") WHICH WOULD DETERMINE MAJOR ECON-
OMIC AND INDUSTRIAL POLICIES. PROCEEDINGS OF THIS BODY
WOULD BE TELEVISED. SECOND ELEMENT IS HIS COMMITMENT
"NOT TO FORM OUR ADMINISTRATION FROM CONSERVATIVES ALONE"
IN EVENT TORIES GAIN MAJORITY. HEATH IMPLIED THAT NON-
CONSERVATIVES WOULD BE OFFERED MINISTERIAL LEVEL POSITIONS
FINALLY, HE PROMISED PROGRAM TO BRING HIGHLY SKILLED,
NON-PARTISAN EXPERTS INTO GOVERNMENT AT SENIOR LEVELS,
THUS CREATING NEW BREED OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL WHO IS
NEITHER CIVIL SERVANT NOR POLITICAN.

2. IN OCTOBER 3 PUBLIC STATEMENTS HEATH ALSO SOUGHT
ONCE MORE TO RALLY NON-SOCIALIST VOTE TO TORY FLAG BY
CHARGING THAT LABOR VICTORY WOULD MEAN END OF "BRITISH
WAY OF LIFE AS WE KNOW IT."

3. COMMENT: NATIONAL CONTRACT INITIATIVES RESPONDED TO
OPPOSITION DEMANDS THAT CONSERVATIVES ELABORATE ON VAGUE
SCHEME, BUT DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE HAD SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ON PASSIVE BRITISH ELECTORATE. MEDIA HAVE BEEN SKEPTICAL
OF HEATH'S PROPOSALS, AND SUGGESTED THEY ARE FURTHER
INDICATION OF TORY DESIRE TO GOVERN IN COALITION. PRO-
POSALS DREW DERISION AT LABOR PARTY'S OCTOBER 4 PRESS
CONFERENCE. IT IS DIFFICULT TO JUDGE LIKELY SUCCESS OF
HEATH'S EFFORTS TO SCARE NON-SOCIALISTS INTO TORY CAMP,
BUT THIS THEME WAS MAJOR ISSUE IN FEBRUARY ELECTION AND
APPEARS SLIGHTLY SHOPWORN.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SPEECHES, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, POLITICAL PARTIES, ELECTORATE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LONDON12985
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740282-0171
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741073/aaaacjyq.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <24 JUL 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HEATH FLESHES OUT NATIONAL CONTRACT PROPOSAL SUMMARY: CONSERVATIVE LEADER HEATH OCTOBER 3 ANNOUNCED
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, UK, (HEATH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005